

Williams-Hopkinson House
338 Spruce Street
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1084

HABS
PA
51-PHILA,
266-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. PA-1084

WILLIAMS-HOPKINSON HOUSE

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Address: 338 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, Philadelphia
County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner
and Occupant: John A. Griswold, 338 Spruce Street, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania.

Present Use: Private single residence.

Brief Statement
of Significance: A Philadelphia row house of the late 18th century
where Joseph Hopkinson resided when he wrote the
words to the famous song "Hail Columbia" in 1798.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and Subsequent owners:

	Grantor	Grantee
6/14/1785	Hannah Richardson, spinster	<u>Jesse Williams</u> , cabinet maker
	a lot sit S s Spruce St. 20' E. from 4th St. Front: 18' Depth: 140'	for 325 pounds
		(D 14 110)
1/1/1791	Jesse Williams, cabinet maker Elizabeth h/w	<u>John Creagh</u> , merchant
	messuage on the above lot	for 1500 pounds
		(D 25 260)
8/26/1802	Ann Creagh, widow et al	<u>Richard Hockly Wilcocks</u> et al
		for 1937 pounds and 10 shillings
		(EF 15 336)
2/26/1805	Richard Hockly Wilcocks et al	<u>Mary Waln</u> , wife of William
		(MR 1 531)

6/16/1821	Caleb North, Esq. High Sheriff	<u>George Harrison</u> , Esq. for \$3,500.00 (Sheriff's deed C 278)
12/2/1823	George Harrison, Esq. Sophia h/w 3 story brick messuage	<u>Elizabeth Powel</u> , widow for \$5,000.00 (IH 9 465)
4/1/1867	Samuel Powel of Newport, R.I. Mary h/w	<u>John W. Donnelly</u> , confectioner (JTO 228 464)
4/1/1890	John W. Donnelly	<u>Joseph Wharton</u> *
12/7/1922	Girard Trust Co. trustee U/W of Joseph Wharton, dec'd	<u>David Rambler</u> *
2/5/1929	David Rambler Rose h/w	<u>Nathaniel S. Chmar</u> *
2/5/1929	Nathaniel S. Chmar	<u>Rose Rambler</u> * wife of David
11/30/1929	David Rambler Rose h/w	<u>David Axelrod</u> *
5/15/1931	David Axelrod Sally h/w	<u>Vera Shecter</u> * wife of Bernard
5/15/1931	Vera Shecter wife of Bernard	<u>Adela M. Kopel</u> * wife of Edward
12/30/1932	Adela M. Kopel wife of Edward	<u>Rose Rambler</u> * wife of David
4/8/1935	David Rambler Sheriff's sale	<u>Girard Trust Co.</u> * trustee

6/8/1941 Girard Trust Co. trustee Rose Rambler*
 U/W wife of David
of Joseph Wharton, dec'd .

5/15/1959 Rose Rambler, widow John A. Griswold*

* Information obtained from records of transfer, Registry Unit, Department of Records, plan 3 S 6, lot 104.

2. Date of erection: After 1785; prior to February 7, 1791.
3. Architect, builder: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction, etc: The precise plan arrangement is not known but the present structure and the insurance survey of February 7, 1791 (see below) support the premise that the front building was a three-and-one-half-story brick structure with one room to front and one room to the rear on each story. A three-story piazza linked the front section to a two-story kitchen wing to the rear in 1791.
5. Additions and alterations: The rear kitchen structure roof was raised and the rear brick wall was built up on either side of the existing kitchen chimney, and the rear basement window of the front structure, which probably opened on a light well, was bricked-in probably in the late 19th century.
6. Important old views:

Photograph dated "Aug 1860" showing southeast corner of 4th and Spruce Streets (negative owned by John A. Griswold, present owner of house, made from photograph in the Historic Society of Pennsylvania) shows shutters at first- and second-floor windows, wood shingles on main front roof, dormer roof and dormer cheeks, and a rectangular downspout conductor.

Photograph 34239 #9 dated 8/6/1957, Philadelphia Historical Commission, City Hall, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shows store front on first with store window approximately 6' x 6', bulkhead removed, front doorway and door plain jamb with paneled door with glass top half. (Several other photographs in Philadelphia Historical Commission files show house during recent renovation.)

Three photographs, "Old Philadelphia Survey," Free Library,
Logan Square, Philadelphia.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: In 1794 Joseph Hopkinson (1770 - 1842), the noted jurist, moved into this house (old number 132 Spruce Street) with his bride Emily Mifflin (daughter of Governor Thomas Mifflin), evidently as a tenant of John Creagh, merchant (owner of the house from 1791 to his death prior to August of 1802). Joseph Hopkinson wrote the words to the famous song "Hail Columbia" (while residing here in 1798) set to the music written some years earlier by his father Francis Hopkinson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. (A bronze tablet was placed on structure by Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1930 to commemorate the event.) Joseph Hopkinson vacated the premises about 1800.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Isaac Jones, surveyor, Mutual Assurance policy No. 242-243 survey, February 7, 1791 (see below).

Philip Justus, surveyor, Mutual Assurance policy (unnumbered) survey, February 7, 1824 (see below).

Five drawings of house and architectural details, "Old Philadelphia Survey," Free Library, Logan Square, Philadelphia.

2. Secondary and published sources:

~~Book~~
Koulde, Burton Alva. Joseph Hopkinson, 1770-1842. Philadelphia, 1931. p. 43, p. 44 note.

Sims, Joseph Patterson, and Willing, Charles. Old Philadelphia Colonial Details. New York: The Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1914. Plates 14, 15, 16.

Philadelphia Inquirer. February 14, 1958.

D. Supplemental Material:

Mutual Assurance Policy No. 242-243 Survey:

"Survey of a three story house situate on the South side of Spruce Street between Third and Fourth belonging to John Creagh -- Dimensions 18 feet front and 36 feet deep lower story. front room -- Breast, Tabernacle frame, mantle, surbase, washboards, windows cased and single cornice. The back room finished in like manner but no cornice. --

Second story finished as below -- Third story-mantles, closet frames, washboards and windows cased. garrets plaistered, trap door -- Piazza 11 feet by 14 with open newel stairs having mahogany posts and rails. the rails rampt. Kitchen 14 feet by 20 and two stories high. Lower story finished as customary. Second story, closet frame, washboards and windows cased.

Feb. 7, 1791
Isaac Jones

£500 insured on the house

£250 ditto on the piazza and Kitchen

Feb. 10th 1791"

[Copy of the original Mutual Assurance policy on the
Hopkinson House, 338 Spruce Street, now in the possession
of the owner, John Griswold]

Mutual Assurance Policy (unnumbered) Survey:

"Survey of Elizabeth Powell's, three story Brick house, situate N^o 132 on the South side of Spruce, between Third & Fourth Streets, Front 18 feet, Depth 38 feet, -- First Story, 2 Rooms, Breasts across, neat mantles, Surbase; Washbds, closets & windows cased, plain wood cornices around the Rooms, Marble to the Chimnies, -- Entry 1 neat Square arcade fluted pilasters, Surbase, washbds & wood cornice -- Square head front door, neat pitch pediment on architraves, -- Second Story, 2 Rooms, finished Similar to the first Story, Third Story, 2 Rooms plain mantles, washbds, closets, windows cased & Inside Shutters, 1 flight common winding Stairs, -- Garret 2 Rooms & plaister'd, Trap door, Roof new, 2 Common Square head dormar windows 12 lights each, glass 8..10 inches, -- Piazza 8 feet 6 inches, by 14 feet, three stories high, 2 flights open newell Mahogany Rampt handrail Stairs, neat Brackets, turnd ballusters, 1 flight with painted half Rails & pilasters -- Roof new, Kitchen 13 feet by 20 feet, Two & half stories high, First Story finished as customary -- Second Story, plain mantle, washbds, closet & windows cased, -- Half Story, washbds & windows cased; Roof new, 1 floor narrow heart pine, other floors heart pine bds, -- Glass 8-10 inches, party walls 9 inches, Stud & Board partitions, An ash hole -- East & West three

story Brick house, Access in the yard by an alley
leading from Cypress Alley, Water plenty.

\$1500 -

Febry 1824

On said House . . \$ Philip Justus
@2-1/2 PCent . . \$

Policy and incidental expenses . . . _____
\$

I acknowledge the above to be a correct Survey of the
Premises and to have received a Deed of Settlement. Philad^a."

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The Williams-Hopkinson House is a large and handsomely detailed Philadelphia row house of the late 18th century.
2. Condition of fabric: Good; in process of a careful restoration 1959-64.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Rectangular plan with rear wing. Front building -- 18' wide by 36' deep, three-and-a-half stories.

Piazza -- 11' x 14', three stories.

Rear wing -- 14' x 20', two stories (original).
2. Foundations: Limestone rubble set in mortar. Opening for rear window of front basement bricked-in.
3. Wall construction: Front facade -- brick, Flemish bond, glazed headers, brick belt courses between stories. Rear facade--brick, common bond.
4. Bulkhead: New bulkhead in place of original.
5. Chimneys: Brick covered with concrete mortar.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Front doorway a replica of original door, molded frame with ears, pediment

above; jambs paneled; eight-panel door.

- b. Windows and shutters: Nine-over-nine double hung wooden sash on first two floors; six-over-six double hung wooden sash in remaining windows. Window frames generally relocated from various other parts of the house. Shutter pintles on window jambs on all three floors ready to receive new shutters.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Front portion gable roof, slope to street, standing seam metal over wooden shingles on stripping; stair hall and rear wing -- shed roof.
- b. Cornice: Wood cornice: (top to bottom) cyma recta, cyma reversa, corona, and ovolo bedmould.
- c. Dormers: Single gable dormers (rectangular six-over-six double hung wooden sash windows) front and rear.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: There is one room to front and one room to the rear on each floor with a hallway on the west, stairs in the piazza behind, and a one-room backbuilding on the first and second floors. An added third floor on backbuilding is to be removed.
- 2. Stairways: Handsome, three run plus two landings, open newel, open string stairs. There is paneling under outer string of the lower run of the stairs on the first floor. Columnar newel and turned balusters (three per tread), ramped handrail, carved wooden bracket decoration under projecting treads; pine construction originally finished in mahogany. Originally there was a shadow rail on the wall side, now removed.
- 3. Flooring: Original tongued-and-grooved, random-width yellow pine board floors throughout. First floor -- 4 to 6-1/2 inches wide; second and third floors -- 6 to 10 inches wide; basement -- concrete.
- 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls and ceilings also described under trim, item 6 below. Basement ceiling exposed 3" x 10-1/2" joists, 15" on center, with plaster on lath between joists; stone chimney, double foundation, concrete trimmer arches between pegged trimmers.

5. Doors: Generally six-paneled doors with raised panels; some four-paneled doors. Front door has eight raised panels on front and is vertical boarded on rear; the upper half of the front door is a reconstruction of the original. Piazza door is paneled on one side and boarded on the other; it is a replacement. Door trim is described under trim, item 6 below.
6. Trim: Elaborate and handsome Georgian-style decorative trim throughout the house.
 - a. First floor, front portion: These two rooms were used in recent years as a store, and the decorative trim is largely missing. Remaining, however, are the original baseboard 6-1/2" and two Pennsylvania marble hearths and parts of the original cornice.

First floor, stair and hall: The original baseboards have been retained and there is evidence of a chair rail and an arch in the hall.

First floor, rear wing: No original trim remains.

- b. Second floor, front portion: Two rooms, front and back, separated by the central chimney block. There is a hall on the west side and a passage on the east side. Both rooms have paneled chimney walls, with the front room slightly the more elaborate of the two.

Second floor, front room in front portion: The projecting chimney breast is paneled and contains a plaster landscape panel enclosed with a four-eared "tabernacle frame". The mantel is supported with consoles. The outer hearth is of Pennsylvania marble, as is the border around the fireplace opening; the inner hearth is of square brick tile. Two six-paneled doors, paneled above, flank the chimney breast, to the west of which is a recessed, six-paneled door to the hall, also paneled above. All three doors have "dog-eared" double architraves on plinth blocks. There is a bold double cornice above the chimney breast, with a single cornice continuing around the room. A simple chair rail and baseboard (not original) surround the room. The windows are cased and have "dog-eared" double architraves.

Second floor, rear room in front portion: The fireplace wall is paneled and has a projecting chimney breast which contains a plaster landscape panel. There is a simple mantel above the fireplace, which contains a square brick tile hearth. Six-paneled doors, with double architraves

and panels above, flank the chimney breast. There is a double cornice on the chimney wall only, and a simple chair rail and baseboard around the room.

Second floor, hall: Simple chair rail and baseboard.

Second floor, rear wing: Contains a fireplace with simple mantel, brick hearth, and flanking closets. Simple window trim and four-paneled door. The second room to the rear is a later addition and is to be removed.

- c. Third floor, front portion: Contains two rooms, front and rear, with a chimney stack between. Simple wooden mantel on front-room fireplace, but none on rear-room fireplace; both fireplaces have brick hearths. There is a chair rail along the window walls only; wooden baseboard.

Third floor, hall: A paneled door to closet under stair, HL hinges.

Third floor, rear wing: A later addition which is to be removed.

- d. Attic: No significant trim. 3" x 5" rafters, 15" on center. 2" x 7" joists, 15" on center. Wood shingles on shingle stripping.

- 7. Hardware: On the front door are very large, original HL hinges and an antique box lock which was not original. There are iron bars protecting the basement windows and the transom of the kitchen door. There is an elaborate and apparently original bell system on the first and second floors, which operated as follows: the pull at the front door rang bells on the first and second floors in the rear rooms of the front portion. Connections were made by means of wire and pulleys, covered by a molded wooden channel. Brass escutcheon and fittings were used in this bell system. There is some other original hardware in the building, but most of them are either later replacements or antiques that are not original with the house.
- 8. Lighting: There is an antique fixture hanging in the first-floor stair hall, which, while it is in the original location, is not original with the house. The house is lighted by a modern electrical system.

9. Heating: Modern central heat. The original fireplaces have been described under trim, item 6 above.

D. Site:

1. Orientation and general setting: The house faces north on Spruce Street, an important east-west city street. There is a small rear yard extending back to Cypress Street.
2. Enclosures: A wooden fence (now replaced by a brick fence) formerly enclosed the sides and back of the rear yard.
3. Walks: There is a cement sidewalk contiguous with the front of the house.
4. Landscaping: Small garden at the rear of the house.

Prepared by James C. Massey, Architect
National Park Service
February 1961

Edited and supplemented by William B. Bassett
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
July 1964

Addendum to:
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(Hopkinson House)
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Philadelphia County
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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20240